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CHRISTMAS

1935

&

OTHER VERSES

By

D. C. DATTA, M A



1941

DEDICATION

Art knows no frontiers and beauty is not bounded; so an elder Caucasian, humbly serving her in the East and rejoicing in its heritage of exquisite rhythm and subtle melody, may venture to tune his modest pipe in the accents of the West, satisfied if here or there one or two discerning ones may perceive the kindred spark of authentic altar flame. It is not of ultimate import that many of earth's families are engaged in mutual destruction; still among all nations are found votaries of the truth of beauty, which is the meaning of life; and this token, though unpretentious, is for them.

ERRATA

<i>Page</i>	12	line three;	<i>for</i>	order; fair	<i>read</i>	order fair
„	20	„ fourteen;	„	tollsome	„	toilsome
„	25	„ three;	„	myraids	„	myriads
„	27	last line;	„	ensnared.	„	ensnared?
„	30	line ten;	„	away	„	awry;
„	32	„ sixteen;	„	need	„	meed.
„	1	„ four;	„	houris	„	houris

FOUR GREAT WOMEN

Translated from the German of Goethe.

First Zuleikha, lovely as the Moon
For Eusuf all longing
Now in joys of Paradise
With radiant hours thronging.

Then the Blessed Virgin Mother
For the souls of heathen born
Saw her only beloved Son
On the cruel cross forlorn.

Then Mahomet's noble consort
Aiding him through the troublous sea
Holding fast all her life through
To one God and his Nabi.

Follows Fatima devoted
Wife and daughter of heroic mould
Her purest soul's angelic sheen
Fair as honey, rare as gold.

HATEM TO ZULEIKHA

Now were Hatem's span to close
Then would seem my pathway clear
I would take at once the form
Of the hero she holds dear.

I would not appear a Rabbi
(that suiteth me but ill)
Rather Firdausi or Mutanabbi
Or the Shah's throne to fill.

* * * *

Thee shall Timur's kingdom serve,
Thee imperial posts obey ;
Rubies from Badakshan borne,
Turquoise from Hyrkanian bay.

Honied fruit for thee prepared
In Bukhara's sunny land
With a thousand precious lays
Writ on silk of Samarkand.

With what zest shalt thou peruse
What I once from Ormuz wrote
How my life and all its toil
I did unto love devote.

How in the land of Brahmanas
Myriad shuttles flew in loom
Fancy and fate of Hindustan
In silken splendour made to bloom.

But at last Bassora bringeth
Myrrh and incense mingled sweet
Through her caravan distilling
Worlds of fragrance at thy feet.

* * * *

G. While man is sober
His baseness grows
When he gets drunken
The right he knows.

H. While without drink
Of love canst not think
Yet while afar from love
Thou shalt not drink.

* * * *

Art thou and thy love asunder
As East and West are ?
Love shall bear thee company,
For the lover Baghdad is not far.

* * * *

Too many senses alas,
For my love-feast's glee,
Listening, I would be blind :
Gazing, dumb long to be.

* * * *

Come, love, bind up my turban
Thine arm enhance my "dulband's" glory
For Abbas on the throne of all Iran
Boasts naught lovelier than my Hourî.

* * * *

Sweetest sweet, how can I fear
In love's service so tender
Bokhara, Balkh, or Samarkand
With all their worldly splendour ?

— — —

When you play and I shall sing
What a music we shall make !
Then you sing and I will play,
What a rhythm that will wake !

With you and me in unison
All the world draws nearer
When you and I may love and live
Heaven will be no dearer

So to draw the world beside us
We shall live apart
Let the joy of heaven betide us,
Commune heart to heart.

— — —

When we were parting last there was
 A message in thine eye,
And as my lingering glance I cast
 I thought I could descry

A quivering in thy lips
 A motion in thy face
Which darted through my soul
 To prove I gained my case.

Surely that cause was strange
 Tried between us alone
For thou thyself wert judge
 And thou the guilty one.

Could I retain that word
 That flashed my soul to teach
Though nothing could be heard
 Effectual my speech!

So if we meet again
 Let not a word be said
If heart agrees with eye
 Love's debt is all repaid.

TO SHAKESPEARE

I would not hate thee if I could,
For Shakespeare is thy son,
England! To woman and the world
'Twere grave injustice done.

I could not hate thee if I would,
For he would stop my mouth
All peoples brand such cowardice
Free north or ordered south.

So Shakespeare, all must honour thee
Within their heart of hearts
For thou didst teach nobility
Judged not by outward parts;

Nor can thy love of thine own land
Be circumscribed or small
For love of manhood, faith, and truth
Doth honour each and all.

Honoured and honouring Shakespeare's love,
England may still confide
Come weal, come woe, none may remove
Her treasure and her pride.

Little rose, art thou fading
Because thy Season's over ?
Or is a worm working thy death
Whom thou tookest for thy lover ?

Little rose, this slow death of thine
And falling off leaf by leaf
Makes me fear lest my love
Should be mocked by loitering grief.

For if death were to come to my love
(And that it must is sure)
Let it come without a warning
For such lingering I cannot endure.

When the last moment comes
Thou shalt be by my side
It was for thy sake that I lived
So at death with me abide.

It was not to live a happy life here
That I cherished thy love ;
It was to suffer and to live
In hope in the bourne above.

TO THE EX-KING EMPEROR EDWARD VIII
ON HIS ABDICATION

The poetry of England cannot die
Her spreading realm owes not its stable frame
To sword or pen ; but ever soaring high
Above convention's blinding dusty game
Her noble hearts are driven by the urge
Of home whose joys they know, despising gains
Of vulgar wealth or honour. Their due charge
To safeguard hearts and homes, and spurn the
chains

Of false ambition : such the Commons' trust
And such the greatest builders of their land,
Husbands and fathers, loyal, firm and just
To seal the seeming shackles that command
Life's sweeter blessings. But thou, crownless King
To-day art theme for no mean bard to sing.

My Laila's eyes are not her own
My heart looks out from hers
She would wear black were it my whim
For blessing to utter a curse.

Gazelle her glance, yet it must feel
The checkless hand of time
But never oak so steadfast was
As her heart in beauty's prime,

In her, extremes and means are one ;
Both her true self and me,
I cannot lose myself in her
Yet can wish her myself to be.

When we did meet—for the last time—
What more is there to tell?
That life is ever treacherous—
The hatefulness of hell?

There was a day, there was a night
Dashed from our lips life's wine,
Surely that was too brief a span,
Remaineth now what sign?

They say that Time heals every wound,
Forgetfulness is sure;
Let slaves forget; I mastered fate,
My altar shall endure

For all we had to give, we gave;
My grief becomes not less,
For ours the sacrificial love
That even angels bless.

Surely it was too early, heart,
To bid adieu to life,
Though young and fiery throb my veins
They soon must cease their strife.

Now that thy lips are warm no more
My heart has lost its light
Thine arms, now cold in death were mine
Just for one day and night.

How happy, could I barter life
And death 'twixt me and thee!
Now welcome grave and bitter bed,
My love takes life from me!

Love's a mad freak , life a mere joke
But not for me outworn ;
By thy one touch, soul of my soul
My paradise was born.

Death only robbed thyself of me
It could achieve no more
The given heart, the taken heart
Cares not to heal its sore.

So pierce the secret of my soul,
Live there, my paradise ;
Though all the world may call me fool
My knowledge shall suffice

If heaven there is, and God there is,
Each other we shall see ;
If such belief is phantasy
What matters it to me ?

No bliss could add to what is ours,
The ecstasy of love ;
Nor without thee could I know peace
In any realm above.

One flesh in life, one soul in death ;
Should I die earlier
Yet dying still my life goes on
In thee much holier . . .

Yes, one in life and one in death,
But shouldst thou die before,
Then living I will die a death
That love may die no more.

INTIMIDATIONS (WITH APOLOGIES TO
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH)

There was a time when nurses, schoolfellows
and dogs
Were the sole companions I knew ;
When every bush or brier teemed with sprites
or hogs
More than two little eyes could view.

It is not so now, as I am a man,
To heaven is due my daily prayer
That ghosts and sprites and goblin stories can
No more my throbbing heart-strings tear.

The Schoolmaster, he comes and goes,
And lovely is each lass
But though I learn the wide world's woes
They spare my heart and pass.

Now younger fools dance in the spring
And schoolboys pass or fail,
Only I know my heart can sing
That in life's sea I sail

Not in some fragile drifting boat
But strong in heart and soul
Like a great whale I swim, not float
Direct unto my goal.

Ye ugly urchins, have your fun,
Enjoy your quips and cranks,
Playing at soldiers, man and wife
And other wilder pranks.

Born blind, we know not when we wake
What curses may befall
But after life, a wife we take
And find that worst of all.

But death's a blessing shared by all
And Providence benign
Brings daily nearer our recall,
The goal that bears the sign

Of sorrow's triumph in the end ;
Afflicted, we confess
The best of life is but to die
If God our cause can bless

Consummate in thy foolishness,
Sin's agony and woe ;
Untold thy misery accurst
Who wilt not let truth flow !

Let chastisement on thee descend,
Let its sure hand thee grasp
To lift thy soul from its abyss
And hold thee in its clasp...

AN ODE TO THE GODDESS MOROSIA OR
DULLNESS

When Jove on high Olympus did decree
A universal banquet to the deities
To open a new order, fair to see
Commanding all heaven's realms and fair cities ;

His satellites appeared from each his place
To offer incense sweet before the face
Of their supreme commander who began
His new-revealed but long-determined plan.

Enthroned on high, Jove with his glittering dome
Surveyed his guests majestic in array :
All of his daughters to the feast had come
Save one, whom spite or fear had kept away.

Forthwith on silver wings was Hermes sent
To wooded Ida's deep secluded grove
To ask the maiden with what grave intent
She in her bower lingered, nor did move.

Morosia named by gods, Dullness by man
With anger stern to tear her hair began
Then when her Father's messenger she found
She scattered myrrh and incense all around,
Her passion flaming at the ready smile
With which the swift one sought to mock her guile.

" To each of us, Jove's daughters, is assigned
Some art or science that the mortal mind
May grasp and energise with skill supreme ;
But me alone all must unworthy deem."

"Sorrow not, goddess; smooth thy direful brow,
Old tyranny is dead, new order sprung;
As all thy sisters have their gifts enow,
So too shall thine by mortal men be sung."

"Round thee Selene shall her dance prolong
And, centred planet thou, receive her song;
Thou, glancing far through space, designest good
And shalt bestow thy presence on thy brood"

Forthwith Morosia by this word solaced
Stooped down to pluck a feather from his heel
And so her father's presence instant graced
And clasped his knees for pardon to appeal.

He, who loves all his offspring, thus did cheer
Her grief, pronouncing "Lo, I have decreed
A planet where anew my will shall rear
A race to love and cherish all thy seed."

SUNDERED

It was a leave-taking so strange
I remember it so well
With breaking heart she came to me
And at my feet she fell.

It was a leave-taking so cruel
I never saw the like
The tyrant sobs did rend her soul
As waves a crumbling dike.

It was a leave-taking sublime
When she confessed her sin
I had not the heart to forgive
Though pitiful her mien.

It was a fatal leave-taking
Forget it can I never
When one word I would not utter
She left my love for ever.

MR. HIDEBOUND'S ADDRESS TO HIS
COMRADES :

When Tennyson was living, lads
Then every line ran smooth
Now you and I are old, lads
Half-wits sing lame half-truth.

When you and I were young, lads
Every girl learnt to knit,
Now you and I must do it, for
The women are unfit.

When you and I were young, lads
The marriages were grand ;
But now that we are poor, lads
The girl wants cash in hand.

When you and I were young, lads
One master was enough ;
Now they have faculties of "profs."
And every one a tough.

When you and I were young, lads
We revered our Queen ;
Now barbers and housepainters rule,
And kings are seldom seen.

The girls, when we were young, lads
Would work and cook and press ;
Now they play contract, badminton,
Or (if they're hard-up) chess.

When you and I were young, lads
Philosophers were few ;
Now every ass must publish to
Make sure we know his view.

When you and I were young, lads
Most decent folk were wed ;
Now fools must jeer at innocence
And argufy instead.

When you and I were young, lads,
Some critics were judicious ;
But now they cannot write themselves
They all have waxed loquacious.

When we were young we had our eyes
And newspapers were small
Now they have swelled so much in size
No one can read them all.

When you and I were young, lads
We loved and wed but one ;
Now, first they wed their mistresses,
Then leave them much alone.

Women in those days lasted long
To full three score and ten
Now they get phthisis in their 'teens
And die as soon as men.

When you and I were young, lads
Garrulous wives were slapped ;
If there's a silent woman left
She's easily entrapped.

When you and I were young we sang
Ballads of Robin Hood
But now the girls sing songs—*swing* songs
"Follies of Hollywood."

When you and I were young, lads
Sick folk were often cured ;
But now relations want them dead
Because they're all insured.

When you and I were young, boys,
The value of money was constant
When you and I are old, boys
Every dunce is an accountant.

When you and I were young, boys
Gentlemen were seldom needy
When you and I are poor, boys
Every woman is phenomenally greedy.

When you and I were young, boys
We were dexterous with hockey sticks
Now that you and I are old, boys
Every wife dabbles in politics.

When you and I were young, boys
Philosophy was feared even by a rascal
Now that you and I are about to die, boys
Every fool lectures on Spinoza or Pascal.

When you and I were young, boys
The only government was monarchy ;
Now that we are not interested in politics, boys
The world is menaced by dictatorship
and anarchy.

When you and I were young, boys
We were taught parsing and analysis ;
Now that you and I are old, boys
People are mad after mesmerism,
hypnotism and metempsychosis.

When you and I were young, boys
Wives backed their husbands with
"Yes, Sir "

When you and I are old, boys
They reject a man who is not also a
chauffeur.

When you and I were young, boys
Girls lived always with a guardian ;
Now that we are grown old, boys
Every woman prefers a simpleton or a
politician.

When you and I were young, boys
Homicide was against conscience ;
Now that we are all grown old, boys
Children have become a nuisance.

When you and I were young boys,
Wives were won by assiduous courtship ;
Now that we have become old, boys
Marriage is thought to be unbearable
hardship.

When you and I were young, boys
Dancing was quite a graceful art,
When you and I are old, boys
Every girl keeps a gymnastic chart.

In the days of our good Queen, boys
They played on violin, banjo and clarion ;
Now the world has so changed, dears,
That every ass can bray his harmonium.

When you and I were young, boys
Science was confined to contraction and
expansion

Now that we are grown old, boys
Every idiot babbles of fifth dimension.

When you and I were young, boys
A woman without a husband was a pity ;

When you and I are old, boys
Marriage is considered a calamity.

When you and I were young, boys
We honoured Turner, Claude and Holbein ;

When you and I are old, boys
The world is full of cubist and futurist—
curious kine !

When you and I were young, dears
Our boys were stalwart as Titans ;

Now that we have become old, boys
They are becoming tennis-playing
cosmopolitans.

When you and I were young, boys
We held beef and ale so dear ;

Now when we are grown old and poor, boys
They broach champagne and lager beer.



MR. DANDY AND MISS ANDY

A Woeful Ballad

Mr. Dandy and Miss Andy, once upon a time
Fell in love with each other ;

Love may be a disease but never a crime
So they began to live together.

It chanced of an evening, while it was raining,
They were crossing a bridge wide,
But flashes of intermittent lightning
Kept them to each other's side.

But how shall we speak of that fickle strumpet
By wise men called Fortune ;
Never consistent except in betrayal
At moments inopportune.

When near the end they were drawing
Of that toilsome travel,
All their coldheartedness thawing
(For they purposed to revel) ;

But human affairs are imperfect
(Those railway contracts are a scandal)
And one of the planks was unfastened
And gave way to Miss Andy's sandal.

Forthwith with a shriek and a shudder
The lady seemed to go down
But the gentleman rushed to assist her
And hastily seized her gown.

But learned Newton has proved the fact
Of a law called gravitation
Regrettably displays no tact
Respecting rank or station. ,

As he felt Miss Andy's sharp descent
Her lover palpitated
But true love certainly is that
Which is not separated.

So they fell both together
They fell to the bottom of the lake;
But fast they clasped each other
Braving all for love's sweet sake.

But all are subject to blind chance
Which rules the wide world over
Alike the drunkard and the dunce,
Or scientist or lover.

And so it happened that in a net
Intended to catch fish
They were recovered, breathing yet,
What better could they wish?

Misfortune is an excellent teacher
As wise Shakespeare has said
And rogues would make this world a hell
If all were fat and fed.

So now Miss Andy and her Dandy
Began to supplicate
That their bodies should be light and handy
Just strong enough to masticate.

Jove on Olympus heard their plea
And granted their desire
That bright apparelled they might be
And weigh no more than fire.

So by this heavenly charter free
To wander here and there
They gazed abroad, on land and sea
And up into the air.

But restless is the human heart
And hardly satisfied
The distant seems the better part
To keep us mortified.

And thus it was, our lightsome pair
Could not go very high ;
For if it blew but half a gale
They dared not it defy.

Nor could they compass means enough
To buy an aeroplane
In which to scour the sky and laugh
To soar above the rain.

But praise to Fortune (faithless dame)
I'll be her votary
For one day millions she may give
Quite unhereditary.'

Now at a party, one fine day,
All eyes were on the pair ;
Their dress was so original
Their beauty was a snare.

Her neck was slender like a crane
Most graceful of them all ;
The pilot of an aeroplane
Felt his soul held in thrall.

Impelled by fate, he started up
For boundless was his love
To take Miss Andy for a flip
And press his suit above.

But Dandy was not left behind
They both together flew ;
How oft their heels were o'er their heads
They neither of them knew.

So lands and cities they surveyed
Vast earth, and men so small ;
Paris, Vienna, Rome, Belgrade,
Baluchistan, Bengal.

Then turning back they made for France ;
At last the pilot crashed
But once again by lucky chance
The lovers were not smashed.

Like wisps of thistledown they fell
Till in a deodar
Caught by the branches, there they stuck
So near and yet so far.

But still you know, good people all,
We hardly need to state
Thin people's appetites are small
Compared with greater weight.

So take the lesson to your heart
From their affliction sore
Ambition makes its victims smart
And still looks round for more.

Our forefathers were simple folk,
On land or sea they died
But we can compass death in air
With scientific pride.

TO THE SPIRIT OF VEDAVYASA.

Thou mighty soul of dear Ancient India !
Seer, prophet and philosopher profound !
Always a modern must fail to plumb or fathom
The depth with which thy music doth
resound.

Faithful echo of the age of India in youthful
charms
By noble life and valiant action flooded
When mighty heroes clashed their dauntless
arms
In sure defence of virtue noble-blooded.

Truly thou figurest the energy of ocean
Stirring the soul alike to action and to
thought
At times the surges of the furious Atlantic,
Anon into the serene and deep Pacific
wrought.

O hapless India ! Learn from thy ancient lore
To seek one quality of manhood truly
great ;
Sublime thought wedded to heroic action
Alone can save thee from inglorious fate.

TO THE MEMORY OF CALIPH OMAR.

O stern Caliph, Justice turned flesh and blood ;
Arabia's noble son, what vision was thine,
When from east to west thy my^{ia}raids flew
To conquer the world lying sunk in mire
Of Roman sloth, whelmed in its stagnant flood ;
Then millions bowed before thy virtue's
shrine,
Which robed Justice in a majesty she never
knew
Till thy unconquerable spirit rose like fire,
To quench the world's dread tyranny and
wrong :
When I compare my little life with thine,
Which petty jealousy and mean ambition
Menace, as overseers do slaves with cruel
thong,
Thy shining might, simplicity divine
Becomes to me heaven's wisest admonition.

I would not be happy if she were alive,
I could not live if she were not dead,
'Tis a blessing that I can her survive
When I must play thus a part so dread.

Should I look upon her in the same plight
As I am enduring to-day
Well I know she must wish for death
As I from my heart now pray.

CHRISTMAS 1935

Dei stultitia hominibus sapientior : i Cor. 1.25

A simpleton was born near two thousand years
ago,

He never knew the art of thriving.
When the Roman eagles soared over all the
world of men

He was for another world striving.

A little pauper baby born in a manger
Hardly could he know the alphabet
Yet he dared challenge the wisest of the sages
And spoke with the true tone of a prophet.

He was an anarchist in the eyes of lawyers
For he made bold to attack
The ancient teaching, the *lex talionis*
The breaking of neck for neck.

Taught holy wisdom to the common people
Such a simpleton was he,
What a thing to do with a mound for a dais,
Lecturing and asking no fee!

Surely at last he displayed presumption
In his naivety making free
With the laws of nature (was it magic or
trickery ?)
Calming the storm-tossed sea.

But never a worse crime, of all he committed
In the eyes of lovers of pelf,
Was there than when he stood up and taught
them
"Love thy neighbour as thyself."

Vested interests, ritual and property
 "Away with this felon!" thundered
The fool had to stagger beneath his own gibbet
The multitude saw and wondered.

So the world had its way, just as it does to-day
 But here one fool without art
Pleads "Let now thy grace descend, heavenly
 Fool and Friend,
Reign in one sorrowing heart."

* * * *

When we met first many oaths were made
When we lived together, many words were said;
They were never light-heartedly uttered
But with every pledge an angel's wing fluttered.

After such a long time all oaths were unmade
Being so near the end, every word was unsaid.
They seem to have been a mere whim
On this side the grave so sure and grim

But, Dear, however thou art, I shall endure
With a heart solely devoted to thee and pure.
By remaining behind have I not spared
Thee the pit that would thy soul have ensnared?

She is coming at last, O
With the burden on her soul
It was I who made it thus,
So sweet a heart to foul!

How may I hide my shame, O
From her keen piercing eye?
I cannot utter one word now
To drown the heaving sigh.

I can put an end to both of us
As honour seems to teach
That her wrong may be absolved in blood
While still within my reach...

But never will I do the deed
Never destroy my sweet
But as she swoons, this heart shall bleed
And perish at her feet.

Thy life is charged with death;
Death enters by each door;
Had I known this before
I had not striv'n for breath.

This light of knowledge shines
Now there's no more to mend
As hastens on the end
Its subtle fire refines.

How surely we repent
Of every act unwise!
Yet blessing in disguise
Oft shows it heaven-sent.

I went to wine to drown my grief
It proved of no avail
So transitory its relief
The cares again assail.

The cup could never keep a heart
To love habituate
It only could enhance the smart
And loss accentuate.

I thought my life was weariness
Until I learned the cure,
The power of love invincible
While memories endure.

My loving pain I can reveal,
My tenderness prolong ;
Although thy loss I cannot heal
I sweeten it with song.

So often my tears flowed
But none was my friend
To-day I'll pour out my blood
And come to my end.

Living I compassed naught,
Dying let me find
Death's oft with blessing fraught
To the steadfast mind.

Love, shalt thou see it all ?
That is my one fear ;
It thou wert not my love
How could death seem dear ?

Baby, open thy lips for dear father's sake,
He is fighting on the Atlantic waves,
Leaving me only to cherish thee for a time,
There relentless enemies he braves.
But that purpose grim justice must condemn,
How can such a one be bent on killing
Brave fathers of helpless babies like to thee,
Satisfied their life-blood to be spilling?
In the world that God made, nothing can be
lost
Our clouded vision sees it all awâÿ;
For every tear shed by a widow or orphan,
Thousands must be wrung from an
emperor's eye.
But in cosmic forces still the heart is human
Let the Creator strike a balance just;
Only to thy mother thy small clinging fingers
Matter more than universes flung to dust.

THE LOVER'S GHOST

Thou art my lover's ghost, say'st thou?
Come to me nearer;
To-day I will love with truer heart,
None to me dearer.
Was it mere flesh and blood at my breast?
Food of desire?
No, let me be a ghost,
True lovers' fire!

THE SKULL

We had gone out in the afternoon
Spending our leisure, dear,
You were loth to speak for a while,
The sad time still so near.

When little Maya, ailing long,
Rallied of a sudden to say
Her last farewell to you and me
And we both knelt to pray.

Soon memory began to fade
Beneath the hand of time
And she who once was all in all
Now makes a theme for rhyme.

The passion flower of our youth
Had but one early bloom
Withered for all the world to see
A thread snapped in life's loom.

But we'll be thankful God has called
A soul so little grown ;
A longer life perhaps had brought
Grief now to us unknown.

But one thing dear, I scarce dare say
Anguish still wrings my heart,
When on your soul such grief still lay
How crass I played my part !

Idle and thoughtless like a lad,
I kicked and kicked a ball
Which presently such hardness had
It seemed to me a skull.

I was quite unaware at first
As it bounced to and fro
Of that small grave that lay beyond
A dozen yards or so ;

There stood the copse where lay the bones
Of Maya gone before
But in earth's bosom now, alas
They are enshrined no more.

Not callous earth but tender heart
Is all I hold my own
All I can do is heave one sigh,
A sigh, and that alone.

* * *

Prate not of chastity, mentor severe
What do you know of my need ?
My soul is not in the same mould as thine
Pining for heavenly meed.

In my life love has become a disease
Yet I would not have a cure ;
Mouthings of torture and warnings of hell
Do not my virtue allure.

When the last sentence shall be pronounced
As between me and thee,
I shall be found in those who denounced
Thy God's unbending decree.

There is a power which no man may seek
Heaven it would not attain
Seemeth it weakness? It comes to the weak,
Daring eternal pain.

O felix culpa ! Happy in blame,
Not as the angels, white ;
Nevertheless gift of Him whose that Name—
Lord of all power and might !

Touch me not, Life ; thy fingers are so bitter
cold ;
Wert thou not by my side
As to-night's storm has brought thee so close
to me
I would have keenly cried.

But O, it seems I must bewail even now,
Why is so still thine eye ?
In my sore need so deep within my bosom
thrust
Yet I hear not thy sigh.

Thou blessed angel, happy through this
sudden shock
Bide thou for me serene
What sudden message came from the throne
of God
To leave this dusty screen ?

I am not jealous of death but of heaven to-day
It is thrice blest in thee,
For but for death Heaven would not be so
enriched
With this prize reft from me.

What angel gave thee birth?
An angel sure was she;
What guardian warmed her hearth?
An angel must he be.

Yet were they angels bright
How could I come so near?
Their everlasting light
Would bar me from thee, dear.

Still meet for angels' love
Art thou, but not their own;
Praise be to God above,
Thy heart is mine alone!

But angels cannot die
Then should I love thee less,
Thou'rt mortal e'en as I
My human life to bless.

Learn not too much if you've a brain
Love not too much if you'd be sane;
But learn to love with all your heart
Then will you know the better part.
Love must be learnt just like a verse
Yet love's a play must not rehearse.
Love's his own guide, none other is;
But million loves make not one bliss!
Love can't be taught, so love is hard
But all heaven's gifts are love's reward.
'Tis love which maketh all things new,
But such creation comes to few.

TO A DYING BABY

Dear baby ! You don't know what you are
doing
Taking yourself away ;
A smile on your lips would be to your parents
More than the gold of Cathay.

Dear baby ! Your passing is nothing stranger
Than all this thing called life ;
If parents always guarded against danger
Peace would rule nations, not strife.

Not brotherly love but the lust of living
Hinders our quest of truth
Let us learn from your face, sweet like an angel
The secret of deathless youth.

I can move the world to tears
If thou comest with thy harp
I cannot charm their ears
Alone to ecstasy or sorrow sharp.

I can overawe the globe
If thou comest with thy loom
And weavest a strange robe
With which I seem caparisoned in gloom.

I can teach all men a lesson
How bravely to fight and die
If thou comest (flame of freedom !)
Despotism to defy.

I will set their hearts ablaze
If thou bringest me thy fire
Kindling all my works and days
Offered in one fair desire.

By myself I little can
In the madness, in the strife
Thou canst change the heart of man
Bring to me, and all men, life ;

I did not like to fight the foe
I have renounced the battlefield
No foeman worthy of my steel
Was there ; but frail their sword and
shield.

I would I met a foe like thee
A fighter noble, valiant, proud ;
How can a master vie with slaves ?
Not mine to maul the recreant crowd.

Had I in combat vanquished one
Dishonoured he had been my slave ;
Yet I had rather it were done
To me, to prove me truly brave.

For in a glorious cause who fights
He counts it gain to fight and fall ;
So I with love contending long
Struggled in vain and lost my all.

How wilt thou fight, dear ?
So tender-hearted ?
How can st thou bear from
Love to be parted ?

Nay, I will prove, dear
Soft hearts are stronger
Than any tempered steel ;
'Tis mine no longer.

Heart all bestowed away,
Will you not waver ?
How face the fierce array ?
Nay, I dare braver.

My heart is in thy care
Fondly to cherish
So may I all things dare,
It cannot perish

Cuckoo, sweet cuckoo, why art thou dumb
to-night
Hast thou forgotten thy summer's glee?
Or is it that the stern autumn storm
Has separated thy mate from thee ?
But cuckoo, loving cuckoo, you will find a
new mate
For the spring will come back soon ;
No, no, only one was precious on earth
I have lost my only boon.
I had only one heart of devotion to give
And wholly I gave it thee, dear ;
It would seem to be better to live like a bird
And have a new lover each year !

Oh, cuckoo, dear cuckoo, had'st thou been as I
Bereft and alone evermore
In our solitude endless our song we'd combine
To pierce to the heart's very core.

It was not pain, love
It was but feigning
To bring thee more near.
It was not death, love,
It was but happiness
To find thee more dear.
It was not sorrowing, dear,
I was but perplexed
To see how the fire of passion
Burnt another by love vexed ;
It was not funeral, dear,
It was a mere pretext
To watch thy sweet lips forming
Love's fairest verse and text.

If there were no tears
There were no love at all,
If there were no fears,
I would not dare to fall.
If there were no jealousy
I would not make thee my love ;
If there were no phantasy
Thou could'st not be my dove.
If there were no weakness,
I would be afraid of a kiss ;
If thou wert a goddess
I would ever take thee amiss.

So be thou what thou art
 A mortal, frail heart, eye and ear ;
So shall we live in concert
 Drawing each to each more near.

I love the sea because it is deep
 Like the music of my dear
It kisses me with cooling sprays
 Like my love when she is near.
I love the sea as it ebbs and flows
 Like the passion of my dear
When my breath is faint new life surges in
 And each wave bestoweth cheer.

I love the sea, for it is so vast
 Like my love's tenderness ;
Though our little nets into it we cast
 Its depth we cannot guess.
I love the sea because of the song
 Of its breakers' ceaseless roll,
So she to whom my thoughts belong
 Can pluck the chord of my soul.

How are thy brows so calm,
 Why are thine eyes serene ?
Thy bosom no more heaves,
 Thou sittest as a queen
Is it thy heart is changed,
 The treasure I held so fast
Has some thief in the night
 Stolen from me at last ?

No one can steal my soul, love
I cling to no bosom now ;
My offering is whole, love,
My all to Love's self I vow.
In loving Love I love not less
Thee who dost Love enshrine ;
The Presence doth the image bless
Eternal and divine.

Look up ! The stars in their courses
Silently wheel in their span ;
Wilt thou with thy pains and remorses
Harass their calm, O man ?
The gasp of thy lust or indulgence
Shall echo beyond the spheres
And pierce to the Heart of effulgence
That loves thy little years.

But for him for whom self is ended
Their light illumines the soul
And a cosmic harmony splendid
In mightier waves shall roll
No ! We are the sons of the Highest
And thence is the rhythm of Time
And the selfless soul draws nighest
To eternity's theme sublime.

Ask the sea what it is doing
The sea it does not know
Ask my love what her heart does
She says thou canst not know.

Ask the sea why it is angry
The sea it does not know ;
Ask my love why she is sullen ;
She says thou shouldst not know.

Ask the sea why it is shining
The sea it does not know ;
Ask my love why she is happy
She says thou durst not know.

Ask the sea when it shall cease,
The sea it does not know ;
Ask my love when she will leave me,
She says thou must not know.

TO A FALLEN ROSE

Wert thou so fair and now hast faded
From thy scant hour's glory ?
Wert uncreate would'st have evaded
A fate that seemeth sorry.
But who am I to pity thee ?
Having a few years' bliss
Were I unborn I need not see
My end as sure as this.
But if death's certain, life's no less
Pity's a wasting sore ,
Were there no death, life could not bless
New life for ever more.

What a happy reaper am I to-day
With such a harvest of kisses !
But it is the field that is so rich and gay
From its plenty never misses.
What a sad reaper shall I be tomorrow
With such a harvest of tears ;
But there is abundance even in thy sorrow
That overwhelms me with cares.
Yet I will be reaping, gather all the harvest
Drain the cup, reach the goal,
I could not endure to play the part of craven
Love of thee to valour moulds my soul.
Therefore, dear , be sowing, raise another
harvest ,
Ready for the reaping I hold my sickle fast
Blow the winds of winters, bitter be the season,
Thou dost nerve me for the keenest blast.

When the sweet nightingale singeth
 There is nought new in it
When my dear singer singeth
 There is beauty infinite.

When the glassy burn ripples
 There is naught new in it
When my dear beloved laughs
 There is charm infinite.

When the meadow breeze blows
 There is no soul in it
When my sweet heaves a sigh
 There is longing infinite.

When the acolian harp chimes
 There is naught new in it
When my love makes melody
 There is grace infinite.

When the moon shineth cool
 There is naught new in it
When my love's smile twinkles
 There is light infinite

When the tide ebbs and flows
 There is naught new in it
When my love's bosom thrills
 There is life infinite.

When dove calls to its mate
 There is no dépth in it
In my dear love's arms
 There is joy infinite.

It were a blessing to die
If thou wert near
It were a pain to fight
Shed'st thou no tear.

It were happiness to pray
If thine the sin
It is blessing to lose
If thou canst win.

It were rapture to learn
If thou wouldst teach
It were punishment to love
If thou didst preach.

It were comfort to be blind
If thou wert my nurse
It were a doom to pray
Against thy curse.

It were bane to be a slave
Didst thou go free
It were utmost heaven
Both slaves to be.



I hate the sea ; it is so same
 It can never be like my love
It rises and falls with dread monotone
 Compared with the song of my dove.

I hate the sea ; it can plumb
 It can never be like my love
It is fifty thousand fathom deep
 How far she soars above !

I hate the sea which all may know,
 It can never be as my love
For she is hid from all who seek
 Wherever they may rove.

I hate the sea betraying men ;
 It giveth up its dead ;
But sunk in love's abyss the soul
 Finds an eternal bed.

If thou and I were all alone
In a wider world than this
And every joy we might call our own
And nothing could run amiss ;

I could not be happier then than now
For my world is thine eye
If thou wilt but this grace allow
For thee to breathe or die.

If the world was smaller far than this
I would not even care
For in thine eye is all my bliss
Be fortune foul or fair.

If I were hateful to the race
Still blessing were my part
For thou art all my resting place
And fortress of my heart.

If we were shut in narrow cell
'Twere greater blessing yet
For I might learn with thee to dwell
With love for all my debt.

Though friendless in this world of God
My life would still be sweet
Since thou canst cast down with one nod
The foeman at thy feet.

Though leaving thee, I must depart
From out this world of care
Still would thy vision glad my heart
For thou art ever fair.

FROM CHANDIDAS

By Jamuna's side She her love replied
And was back to her abode,
While lonely seated With tears she greeted
For love's charming mode.

Her burning forehead in her palms was hid
Sad her ascetic mien
Through her eyes did tears in ceaseless
 gush rush
As a shower in July seen.

Then came at the end her maiden friend
To meet her lonely Queen
Whose youth was When she to her
enthralled called
And clasped to her bosom serene.

With her garment's she wiped the tear-
 hem drop gem
 Tender words one heard her say
 To-day what sorrow, has bid thee so
 dear appear?
 Tell O tell me pray.

Thy life through I trow never did sorrow know
Untroubled thy royal lot
Tell O tell me pray how I comfort may
Thy heart with pain so fraught.

For thy perfumed hair not at all dost care
And unconscious art to-day ;
Chandidas sings how heavy thy heart now
Scorched by Love's piercing ray.

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Those marked with an asterisk * are translations.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
STEPHEN ALLEN
47, NEW THEATRE ROAD

PRINTERS
WILSON & SON
57, ELLIOTT ROAD
CALCUTTA

1941

